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 ACTION ARA-01

RELEASED IN PART
 B6, B1, 1.4(B), 1.4(D)

INFO	LOG-00	ACDA-15	AMAD-01	CIAE-00	C-01	DODE-00	HA-09
	H-01	INRE-00	INR-01	L-03	ADS-00	NSAE-00	NSCE-00
	OMB-01	PA-01	PM-01	PRS-01	P-01	SNP-01	SP-01
	SSO-00	SS-01	TRSE-00	T-01	USIE-00	/041W	

-----192D27 111255Z /38

O 111253Z MAR 92 ZFF4
 FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS
 TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9003
 INFO USCINCSO QUARRY HTS PM
 AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

CONFIDENTIAL SECTION 01 OF 02 CARACAS 02666

E.O. 12356: DECL:OADR
 TAGS: PREL, MARR, PGOV, US, CO, VE
 SUBJECT: [REDACTED]

B1, B6

[REDACTED] ON THE POLITICAL CRISIS

1. C - ENTIRE TEXT.

2. SUMMARY: [REDACTED]

B1

[REDACTED] BELIEVES THAT THE POLITICAL CLASS DIVORCE FROM REALITY WAS THE BASIC CAUSE OF THE COUP ATTEMPT. THE COUP ITSELF WAS LARGELY THE WORK OF THE RADICAL LEFT, WHICH THREATENS TO CONTROL A CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY IF ONE IS CONVOKED. [REDACTED] BELIEVES THAT CAP MUST NAME A CREDIBLE CABINET AND "FORGET ABOUT THE CONFIDENTIAL"

B6

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OUTSIDE WORLD" IF THE CRISIS IS TO BE OVERCOME. [REDACTED]

B6

[REDACTED] ALSO THINKS THAT U.S. SUPPORT OF VENEZUELAN DEMOCRACY IS VERY IMPORTANT, BUT CAUTIONS THAT U.S. OFFICIALS SHOULD BE DISCREET IN THEIR PUBLIC STATEMENTS. END SUMMARY.

B6

MEETING WITH MORALES PAUL

3. THE AMBASSADOR HOSTED [REDACTED]

B1

[REDACTED] TO BREAKFAST ON MARCH 10.

[REDACTED] COMMENTED ON THE COUP ATTEMPT AND ENSUING POLITICAL CRISIS AS FOLLOWS.

B6

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THE CAUSES OF THE COUP ATTEMPT

4. [REDACTED] SAID THAT THE POLITICAL CLASS' DIVORCE FROM REALITY WAS THE BASIC CAUSE OF THE FEBRUARY 4 COUP ATTEMPT. OVER TIME, THE POLITICIANS HAD LOST CREDIBILITY OWING TO THEIR FAILURE TO KEEP THEIR PROMISES. THE LACK OF A SOCIAL PROGRAM ADEQUATELY COMPLEMENTING THE ECONOMIC REFORM PROGRAM ONLY GUARANTEED A NEGATIVE POPULAR REACTION AS IN FEBRUARY, 1989 (THE DATE OF THE "CARACAZO" OR LARGE-SCALE RIOTS).

B6

[REDACTED]

B1

ACKNOWLEDGING THAT COMMUNICATION BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE HAD BEEN A PROBLEM, THE AMBASSADOR CITED THE CASE
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OF MEXICO, WHERE THE GOVERNMENT HAD SKILFULLY LINKED
REFORMS SUCH AS PRIVATIZATION TO THE WELFARE OF THE PEOPLE.

6. IN RESPONSE, [REDACTED] ADMITTED THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD MADE MISTAKES: EXCESSIVE CONCENTRATION ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS, TOLERANCE OF CORRUPTION, POOR COMMUNICATION (AS IN THE CASE OF CAP'S FOUR FLIP-FLOPS IN ONLY ONE WEEK ON THE QUESTION OF TERRITORIAL RIGHTS IN THE GULF OF VENEZUELA) AND DOWNRIGHT MISMANAGEMENT. CAP'S INITIAL CABINET WAS "STRANGE", [REDACTED] CONTINUED, IN THAT IT JOINED TOGETHER FORMER GUERRILLAS/RADICAL LEFTISTS WITH TECHNOCRATS.

B6

B6

THE COUP ATTEMPT AND THE LEFT

7. [REDACTED] ADDING THAT RADICAL LEFT GROUPS SUCH AS THE POLITICAL PARTY "CAUSA R", WOULD-BE GUERRILLAS SUCH AS RED FLAG (BANDERA ROJA) AND THE PATRIOTIC FRONT HAD BEEN PROPAGANDIZING MID AND LOWER-LEVEL OFFICERS FOR SOME TIME BEFORE THE COUP ATTEMPT. THE ATTEMPT ITSELF, [REDACTED] EMPHASIZED, SHOULD BE VIEWED AS A LEFTIST-INSPIRED PHENOMENON. (COMMENT: SOME TIES BETWEEN THE BOLIVARIANS AND THE LEFTIST FRINGE GROUPS CAN NOW BE

B1, B6

B6

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REGARDED AS ESTABLISHED, BUT WE THINK [REDACTED] OVERSTATED
THE DEGREE OF LEFTIST INFLUENCE OVER CHAVEZ AND HIS MEN.)

B6

THE LEFT AND A CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

8. CONTINUING TO ADDRESS WHAT THE LEFT IS UP TO, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] EXPRESSED FEAR ABOUT THE RESULTS OF A CONSTITUENT
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B6

B6

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ASSEMBLY, WHICH HE TERMED "ALMOST INEVITABLE" IN PRESENT
CIRCUMSTANCES. A MAJORITY OF ITS MEMBERS, HE BELIEVES,
WOULD BE LEFTISTS IDENTIFYING THEMSELVES WITH FORMER
PRESIDENT RAFAEL CALDERA, CAUSA R, AND OTHER INDIVIDUALS
AND GROUPS PERCEIVED TO BE ON THE LEFT. THE ESTABLISHED
PARTIES, [REDACTED] THINKS, WILL BE ABLE TO ELECT FEWER
THAN 50 PERCENT OF THE DELEGATES TO SUCH AN ASSEMBLY. IN
THAT CASE, HE ANTICIPATES, THE RESULT WILL BE THREE QUICK
DECREES (DISSOLUTION OF CONGRESS, DISMISSAL OF THE
PRESIDENT, AND A PARDON FOR THE COUP PLOTTERS), IN THE
WORST CASE LEADING TO "CIVIL WAR."

B6

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B6

WHAT CAP SHOULD DO

9. [REDACTED] SAID THAT CAP SHOULD SELECT A STRONG B6
CABINET AND "FORGET ABOUT THE OUTSIDE WORLD" FOR A WHILE. B6
[REDACTED] ADDED THAT HE BELIEVED THE CABINET WHICH WAS
PROBABLY GOING TO BE ANNOUNCED LATER THAT DAY (SEPTEL),
FEATURING LUIS PINERUA ORDAZ AS NEW MINISTER OF THE
INTERIOR, WOULD BE POPULARLY PERCEIVED AS A STRONG ONE.

WHAT THE U.S. SHOULD DO

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B6

10. [REDACTED] WHILE NOTING THE IMPORTANCE OF U.S. B6
SUPPORT OF VENEZUELAN DEMOCRACY, DID NOT MENTION ANYTHING
SPECIFIC WHEN THE AMBASSADOR ASKED HIM FOR SUGGESTIONS
ABOUT WHAT THE U.S. SHOULD DO. [REDACTED] STRESSED THAT B6
U.S. OFFICIALS SHOULD BE DISCREET IN THEIR PUBLIC
STATEMENTS.

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